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East European Military, Security, and Intelligence Advisory and Training Programs for LDCs

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A Research Paper

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East European Military, Security, and Intelligence Advisory and Training Programs for LDCs

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A Research Paper

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of Global Issues. It was coordinated with the
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**East European Military, Security,
and Intelligence Advisory and
Training Programs for LDCs**

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Summary

*Information available
as of 1 August 1984
was used in this report.*

Since the late 1970s, the scope of East European military and related advisory and training programs for less developed countries has expanded rapidly. In 1983 more than 2,600 East Europeans performed military support functions in some 25 LDCs—approximately matching the record set in 1982 and a sharp contrast to about 150 personnel present a decade earlier. Similarly, some 1,850 trainees from the Third World—more than 15 times the number in 1974—departed for Eastern Europe last year. Equally important, East European governments provided an expanded array of assistance in both LDCs and Eastern Europe. Their programs, however, still are smaller and—except for East Germany—far less comprehensive functionally than that of the USSR. The East European presence abroad in 1983, for example, was only 15 percent of the Soviet presence, and less than half the number of LDC trainees went to Eastern Europe than to the USSR.

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The East European programs parallel and complement Soviet training and advisory activities in several important respects. Arms buyers in Africa and the Middle East, for example, are the biggest customers for all Warsaw Pact services, reflecting the close cooperation between Moscow and its allies in meeting the needs of important clients. Moreover, Soviet and East European programs are administered similarly. In both cases, they are part of the overall military assistance packages to LDCs that also include the provision of weapons, other materiel, and construction projects.

East Germany is by far the most active non-Soviet Warsaw Pact supplier of advisers and training, accounting for about half the East Europeans abroad in 1983 and accommodating some 40 percent of trainees sent to Eastern Europe. Berlin historically has met LDC demands in the security/intelligence field—an area in which East German capabilities at least match those of the USSR—although in recent years it has also provided increasing support in military areas. Other East European programs, more narrowly focused functionally and geographically, have remained smaller than East Germany's (and the USSR's), although not necessarily unimportant to both supplier and recipient. Bulgaria, uniquely among East European countries, focuses on training insurgent and irredentist groups—probably a function of its expertise and close relationship with Moscow.

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East European advisory and training activities clearly reflect Soviet efforts to enlist the support of its allies to help Moscow gain influence in the Third World and penetrate military and government establishments. East European countries, as members of the Warsaw Pact, are obligated to support Soviet policy for political and economic reasons. As a result, Moscow attempts to orchestrate East European selection of targets and the timing

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of commitments, sometimes exerting considerable pressure. Although direct evidence is lacking, some East European commitments—such as East Germany's in Angola and Ethiopia—suggest close coordination with Moscow. Occasionally—for political reasons—East Europeans have provided training instead of the Soviets. Bulgaria, for example, was the first Warsaw Pact country to train Nicaraguans, according to [redacted]

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[redacted] US attache reporting. [redacted]

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East European governments also have pursued advisory and training activities for nationalistic purposes. The genesis of East Germany's program, for example, was Berlin's efforts in the 1950s to establish itself as a legitimate government and compete successfully with West Germany. Romania, the most independent member of the Warsaw Pact, portrays itself as a developing, nonaligned country that offers Third World states an alternative to assistance from the large powers. Aside from political considerations, East European governments have been motivated by hard currency earnings. We estimate that LDC obligations for military services totaled some \$260 million in 1979-83—seven times the estimated 1974-78 figure [redacted]

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[redacted] East European advisory and training programs are well received by LDCs. Virtually all clients value the opportunity to acquire support, often qualitatively equal or superior to that offered by the USSR and without the blatant drive for political influence associated with the Soviet program. Czechoslovak technicians in Nigeria, for example, have kept most of the trainer aircraft supplied by Prague operational, [redacted]—a stark contrast to Moscow's problem-plagued MIG-21 program there. The most frequent complaints by LDCs concern costs, which generally exceed Soviet charges, although some customers have faulted assistance substantively (mostly training in Eastern Europe) or dislike the close ties of East Germany to the USSR. [redacted]

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Continuing demands by LDCs for East European services and the willingness, to varying degrees, of these governments to provide them indicate further growth of the programs, albeit possibly at a slower pace than in recent years. East Germany undoubtedly will remain the most active East European country, based on its ability to meet a range of requirements and its close ties to Moscow. The programs of suppliers such as Czechoslovakia and Poland, barring their emergence as major arms suppliers, probably will be confined to a small number of clients, while Bulgaria will continue to focus on training insurgents. Although East European programs still will be concentrated among large arms buyers in the Middle East and Africa, recent initiatives by Bulgaria and East Germany in Nicaragua suggest that the regional scope will continue to expand. [redacted]

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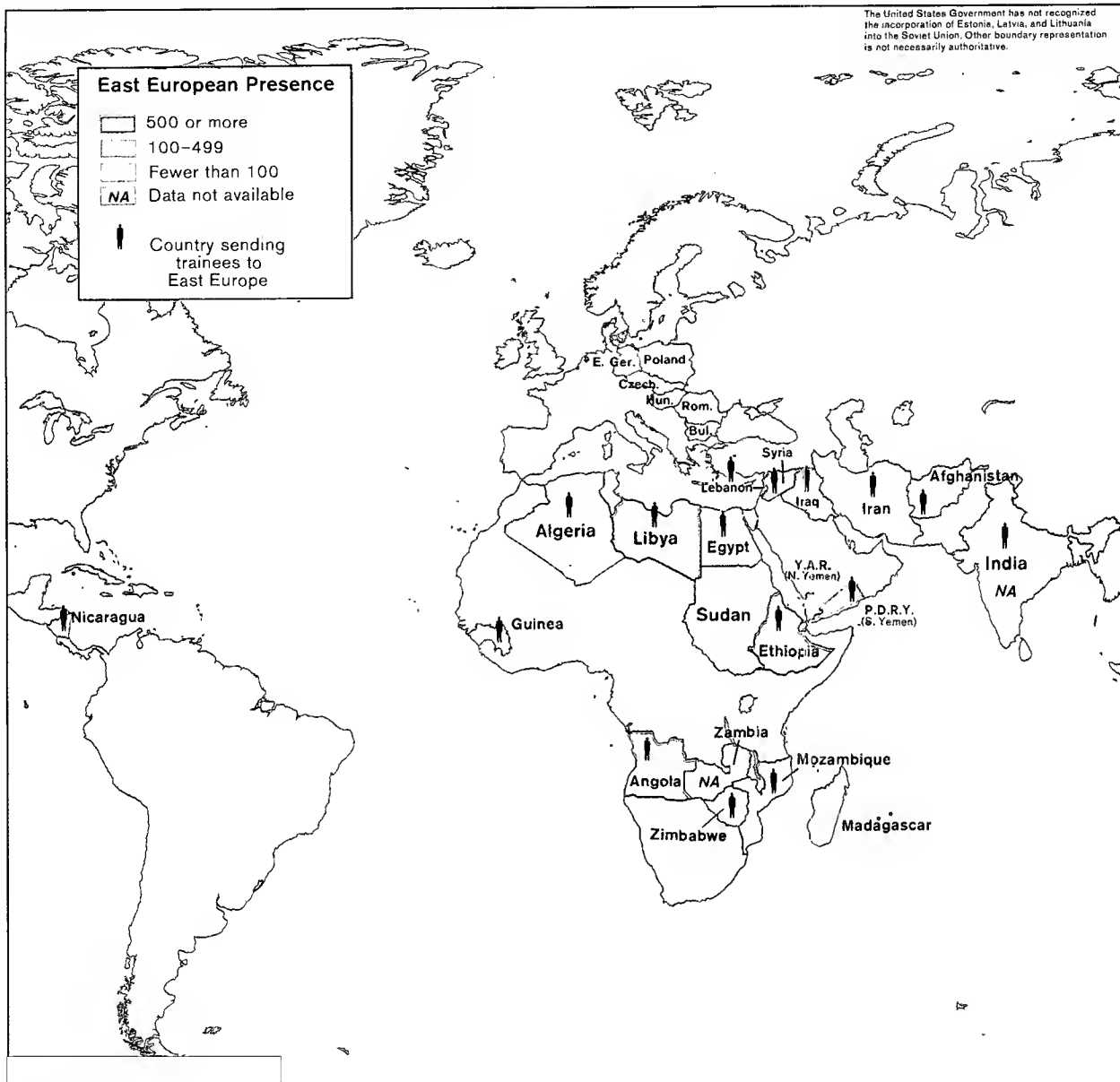
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East European Military, Security, and Intelligence Advisory and Training Clients in the Third World, 1983



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**East European Military, Security,
and Intelligence Advisory and
Training Programs for LDCs**

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East European countries,¹ especially East Germany, have broadened their ties and expanded activities in the Third World significantly since the late 1970s. One of the most important vehicles has been the supply of military, security, and intelligence advisory assistance and training.² These programs complement parallel efforts of the USSR for the Third World. Moreover, they supplement related Soviet and East European activities, including limited economic aid, active measures (such as disinformation and exploitation of front organizations), and expanded party-to-party relations. East European governments have increased advisory and training aid, to varying degrees, both to support the Soviet geopolitical objective of gaining influence at Western expense—especially in strategic areas—and to realize national goals. The most important of these for all East European suppliers is hard currency earnings—less of a consideration for the Soviets. Other goals of specific countries vary widely:

- The involvement of East Germany, one of Moscow's closest allies, is traceable largely to its longstanding efforts to gain international visibility, especially vis-a-vis West Germany; its capabilities, especially in the security/intelligence field, are an outgrowth of expertise developed before and during World War II.
- The programs of smaller suppliers, such as Czechoslovakia and Poland, help promote arms sales to selected clients.
- Romania offers assistance largely to enhance its position as the most independent member of the Warsaw Pact.

Experts in LDCs: Various Levels of Support

Since the late 1970s, increasing numbers of East European military, security, and intelligence personnel have

¹ Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania.

² This paper includes a discussion of security and intelligence advisory support and training because functionally such assistance parallels strictly military efforts (rather than economic aid) and often is provided in conjunction with military assistance.

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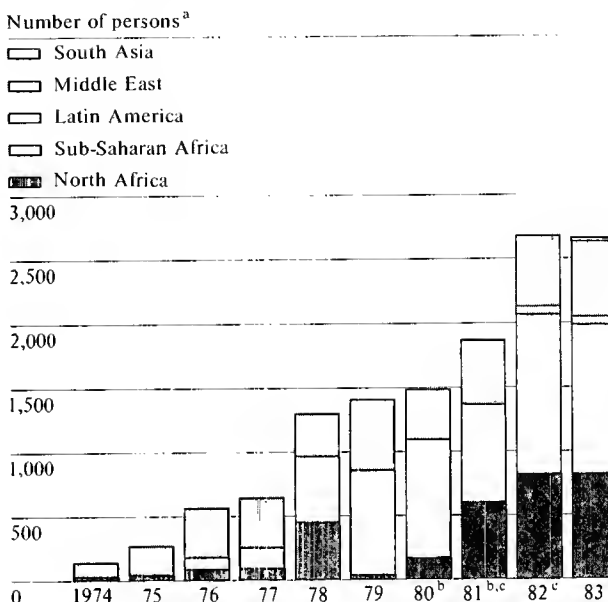
been sent to LDCs worldwide to provide assistance in a growing number of fields. A near-record 2,655 such experts were stationed in about 25 LDCs in 1983.³ The doubling of their presence since 1978 (figure 1) outpaced even the surge in Soviet experts abroad. East Germany, the most aggressive non-Soviet Warsaw Pact country, accounted for half the East European presence in 1983 (figure 2). Czechoslovakia and Poland, largely as a result of arms sales to Libya, also contributed to the dramatic gains in the East European presence.

The types of East European military and related personnel sent to LDCs parallel the composition of Soviets stationed abroad. According to [redacted] US attache reporting, they consist of:

- *Advisers.* Almost always military or state security officers, advisers are assigned to LDC staff units, line commands, and academies.
- *Technicians.* Principally enlisted men, technicians maintain and repair military hardware provided by their own governments and the USSR.
- *Instructors.* East European personnel train officers and troops in the operation and maintenance of weapons and nonlethal hardware and in security and intelligence activities, and sometimes provide political indoctrination.
- *Support personnel.* Interpreters, administrators, and logistic experts assist East Europeans working directly with LDC personnel.

As is the case with the Soviet program, the increase in East European experts in LDCs is related to deliveries of military equipment (figure 3). This has been especially true in the Middle East and North Africa.

Figure 1
Eastern Europe: Military and Security/Intelligence Personnel in LDCs, 1974-83



^a Estimated number of personnel present for one month or more.

^b Data not available for Latin America.

^c Data not available for South Asia.

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Nearly half of all East Europeans in LDCs, for example, were in Libya, Iraq, and Syria, which accounted for 85 percent of the value of East European deliveries in 1983. East European assistance to LDCs also has been driven by:

- Soviet pressure. In 1980, for example, Moscow asked East Germany to send technical personnel to North Yemen, according to US attache reporting.
- Large Soviet arms deliveries. East Europeans sometimes are assigned to maintain or provide instruction on such hardware.
- Growing LDC demands for security/intelligence services.
- More favorable financial arrangements than offered by Western suppliers, although less generous than Soviet terms.

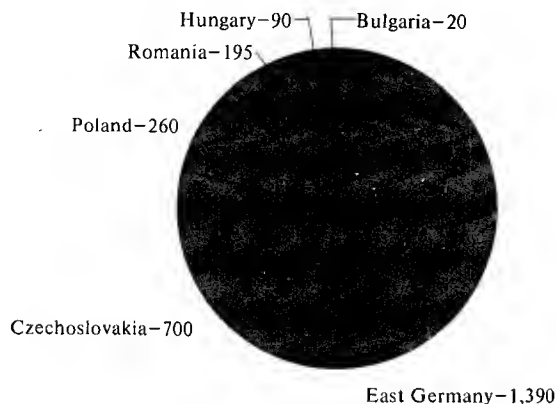
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Figure 2
Eastern Europe: Estimated Composition of
Military Advisors and Technicians in LDCs, by
Supplier, 1983

Number of persons



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Security and intelligence specialists and instructors constitute one of the largest functional contingents of East Europeans in LDCs. These experts, who made up an estimated 30 percent of the total presence in 1983, are virtually all East Germans from both military and state organizations sent to help LDCs defend "revolutionary" gains. They have been assigned throughout the Third World:

- About 60 intelligence and security experts, including electronics technicians, were sent to Nicaragua in late 1982, according to US Embassy reporting

State security and intelligence personnel usually function independently of East German military and security experts in LDCs. Those assigned to Mozambique in the late 1970s, for example, received their orders directly from the State Security Service in East Germany, according to US attache reporting

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Army and Air Force personnel account for almost all the estimated 1,800 East Europeans assigned to LDC military services. This distribution largely reflects the pattern of weapons deliveries. Armies, typically the largest military organization in LDCs, usually receive the bulk of weapons imports. Most clients are not able to operate and satisfactorily maintain aircraft—even the less advanced models supplied by Eastern Europe—on their own. All non-Soviet Warsaw Pact countries except Bulgaria and Hungary have been noted providing assistance to these services:

- Czechoslovakia and Poland have focused their efforts on Libya, where they have provided instruction on L-39 trainer aircraft, MI-2 helicopters, tanks and other armored vehicles, and other ground force weapons supplied by Prague and Warsaw, according to US attache reporting. Poles in Libya also are completing installation of an expanded coastal radar network, according to US attache reporting.
- East German Army and Air Force personnel are present in LDCs throughout Africa and the Middle East, where they have functioned as pilot instructors (Zambia) and technicians on weapons and nonlethal hardware (Syria), and have provided air defense training (South Yemen), according to State Department and US attache reporting.
- Some 150 Romanian Air Force pilot instructors and mechanics were posted to Angola's military aviation school in 1982, according to US attache reporting.

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East European technicians also have been sent to LDCs to supervise military construction projects.

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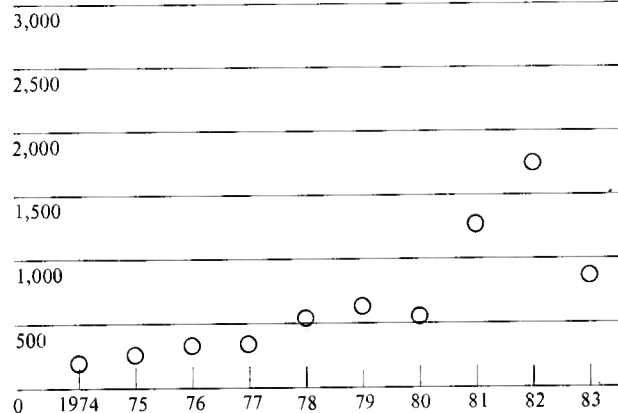
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Figure 3
Eastern Europe: Comparison of Military Presence and
Deliveries to LDCs, 1974-83

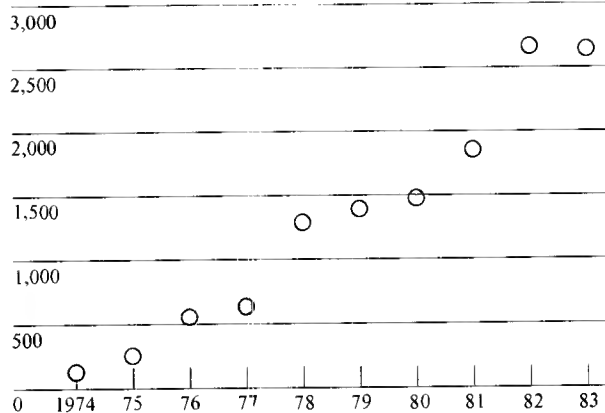
Military Deliveries to LDCs, 1974-83

Million US \$



Military Advisory Personnel Present in LDCs

Number of persons



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Czechoslovakia has been one of the most active suppliers in this regard.

Few East Europeans are assigned to LDC navies—almost always the smallest military service—or to general staff positions, which Soviets typically monopolize. Most of the East Europeans in these categories have been East Germans in Sub-Saharan Africa:

Military Training in Eastern Europe:
Diverse Courses and Clients

The flow of LDC trainees sent to East European countries has surged in recent years, reaching an estimated 1,840 departures in 1983 (figure 4)—a record. Like the growth in East Europeans posted abroad, expanded training reflects increased arms sales as well as the need to conduct some instruction (such as advanced weapons maintenance) at special facilities. About 90 percent of all trainees went to East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland—the same countries that supply the bulk of East European experts working in LDCs. Libya sent some two-thirds of all trainees to Eastern Europe, while Algeria, Iran, and Syria accounted for most of the remainder (table 2).

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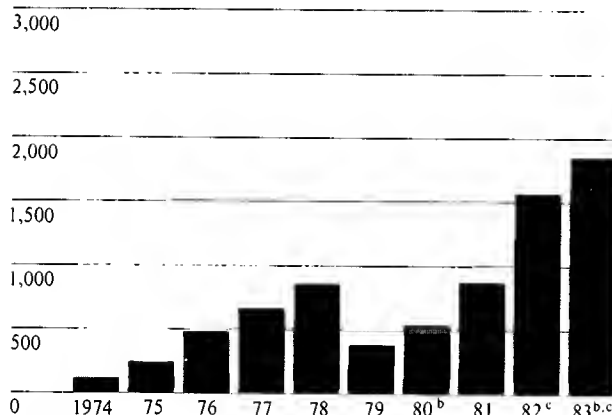
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Figure 4
Eastern Europe: Military and Related
Trainees From LDCs, 1974-83

Number of persons^a

■ South Asia
 ■ Middle East
 ■ Latin America
 ■ Sub-Saharan Africa
 ■ North Africa



^a Estimated number of departures. Actual departures to Eastern Europe probably are significantly higher and more evenly distributed than depicted above; a poor data base, however prevents better quantification.

^b Data not available for South Asia.

^c Data not available for Latin America.

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The general characteristics of East European training programs for LDCs are similar to those of the USSR—a reflection of the pervasive, longstanding domination of its allies. All Warsaw Pact training accommodates the varying capabilities of students with different backgrounds, mainly by conducting separate classes and offering rudimentary courses. Moreover, they emphasize rigid adherence to prescribed procedures. This tendency, however, is less pronounced among some East European countries, such as Poland. The similarity between East European and Soviet curriculums occasionally is manifested in complementary instruction for certain trainees. About 250 members of the radical Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine were sent to Bulgaria and East Germany in 1980, for example, before a second phase of similar instruction in the USSR.

East Germany's training program is by far the most comprehensive of non-Soviet Warsaw Pact countries. Berlin provides a wide variety of basic and advanced military, security and intelligence, and police instruction—all including heavy doses of political indoctrination, unlike most other East European-sponsored courses. Sub-Saharan countries and Libya have been traditional East German clients, although Berlin has broadened its list of recipients during the past several years:

Training in other East European countries is more narrowly focused than in East Germany. Czechoslovakia and Poland, whose primary client is Libya, provide technical instruction, mainly on weapons supplied by Prague and Warsaw.

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Table 2
Eastern Europe:
Estimated Composition of LDC
Military and Related Trainees, 1983

Number of persons ^a

	Total	Bulgaria	Czechoslovakia	East Germany	Hungary	Poland	Romania
Total	1,840	NA	525	750	40	450	75
Algeria	200			200			
Libya	1,200		500	300	NA	400	
Iran	200			200			
Syria	100		25		25	50	
Other	140	NA		50	15		75

^a Estimated number of departures.

Bulgaria's training program is unique in several respects. As one of Moscow's closest allies, Sofia has provided instruction in politically sensitive situations, instead of the USSR.

Nearly 50 facilities used to train LDC personnel have been identified throughout Eastern Europe, mainly in East Germany and Poland. These include officer and noncommissioned officer schools, academies, security/intelligence installations, and state production plants. Because most of these sites are used mainly to train indigenous personnel, separate classes usually are established to accommodate language and aptitude needs of specific LDC students, according to US attache reporting.

Surging Hard Currency Receipts

Hard currency earnings provide much of the impetus for East European advisory and training services to LDCs. These suppliers historically have placed more emphasis on generating financial returns than the USSR, and this goal has become increasingly important as key clients—mainly in the Middle East and North Africa—realized large oil revenues in the mid-1970s. Even poor LDCs, such as Somalia, sometimes have been required to pay for services, according to US attache reporting.

We estimate that LDC hard currency obligations to East European governments for advisory and training services totaled roughly \$260 million in 1979-83—more than seven times the value during the previous five years (table 3).⁴ Obligations surged in the early 1980s—reaching more than \$100 million in 1983—on the strength of increased training in Eastern Europe.

⁴ Hard currency obligations estimates are based on average reported charges per recipient applied to all LDCs required to reimburse East European governments for services rendered. The estimates assume that payments, to the extent they are made, are received in the same year services are performed—a reflection of the requirement that reimbursement be made on a current account basis. Although payment data are far from complete, sufficient evidence exists to judge the general level of obligations.

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Table 3 *Million US \$*
**Eastern Europe: Estimated Hard
 Currency Obligations From Military
 Advisory Services and Training for
 LDCs, 1974-83^a**

	1974- 78	1979- 83	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Total	35	260	15	20	35	75	115
Bulgaria	NEGL	NEGL	NEGL	NEGL	NEGL	NEGL	NEGL
Czechoslovakia	10	85	5	10	10	20	40
East Germany	20	105	5	10	20	30	40
Hungary	NEGL	5	NEGL	NEGL	NEGL	NEGL	5
Poland	5	55	5	NEGL	5	20	25
Romania	NEGL	10	NEGL	NEGL	NEGL	5	5

^a Rounded to the nearest \$5 million. Actual receipts, in contrast to obligations, undoubtedly were lower.

Libya accounted for about 60 percent of 1979-83 obligations, while virtually all the remainder probably came from Iraq, Syria, Algeria, and Angola. Actual receipts, however, may have been lower than the \$260 million in obligations, as declining oil revenues undoubtedly led to payment arrearages.

Most hard currency earnings have accrued to East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland—a reflection of their leading position among East European countries in providing advisory and training services. Training in these countries generated an estimated two-thirds of total East European revenues from these programs in 1979-83—a sharp contrast to the Soviet program, which realizes most earnings from personnel posted abroad. This circumstance is largely attributable to the estimated 2,200 Libyans sent to East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland during the past five years—far more than from any other LDC.

East European countries have independent policies for pricing advisory services and training, although in general such fees are higher than comparable Soviet charges. US attache reporting, for example, indicates that Syrian payments in 1978 for officers and enlisted men of the same grade from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Bulgaria varied as much as

several thousand dollars annually. The average reimbursement for these technicians—\$15,000 a year—was about 50 percent greater than for their Soviet counterparts. In general, Libya pays the highest rates of any LDC.

Some especially poor LDCs continue to be provided training on concessionary terms. Virtually all expenses incurred by trainees sent to East Germany from Benin and Ethiopia in 1980 and 1982, for example, were borne by Berlin.

LDCs in precarious financial situations also are provided in-country advisory services largely on a grant basis.

East European hard currency earnings are especially favorable when considered in the context of salaries paid to individual experts and the other expenses of the programs. Overall, such costs are much lower than receipts. Various Czechoslovak technicians in Libya in the late 1970s, for instance, received only a fraction of the \$15,000 and up paid by Tripoli to Prague, according to US attache reporting. More important, most expenses are payable in soft currency. Although the advisers also may receive a small amount of hard currency, the bulk of their salaries almost always is denominated in East European currencies and deposited in accounts in their native countries, according to US attache reporting. Moreover, the local expenses in LDCs occasionally subsidized by East European governments—for which all recipients are contractually responsible—are soft currency expenditures.

An Assessment: Gains Outweigh Drawbacks

The rapid expansion of East European training and advisory programs during the past decade reflects the ability and willingness of supplier countries to meet growing LDC requirements for improved military and security capabilities. Although neither suppliers nor recipients have realized all their objectives, the mutual benefits of the programs have outweighed the disadvantages.

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East European governments probably consider hard currency earnings to be the most important return associated with their training and advisory programs. These receipts have helped reduce the large current account deficits of all East European countries (except for Poland, which still had a more than \$2 billion deficit in 1983) and Bulgaria (which has enjoyed a surplus for years). Some East European countries—notably East Germany—have acquired reputations in the Third World as reliable sources of unique services, a situation that has buttressed efforts to achieve recognition independent of the USSR. Advisory and training programs also have spurred arms sales (especially by Czechoslovakia, by far the largest East European seller of arms), which in turn increase demands for services. Despite these benefits, most supplier countries, except for Romania, probably would have pursued training and advisory programs for LDCs solely to satisfy their obligations to Moscow, although less actively.

East European advisory and training programs, especially East Germany's, also have served Soviet interests by affording Moscow expanded, albeit indirect, opportunities for political penetration of LDCs. This return has been most significant in LDCs where the Soviet presence is restricted for internal or external political reasons. East European activities have enabled Moscow to gain access to military intelligence and assess attitudes of key government decision-makers who often have close ties to the military.

Many LDCs value East European assistance because they believe it protects their nonaligned image. East European governments present their programs as efforts independent of the USSR to help support the illusion of nonalignment. Substantively, some East European assistance is preferred to that offered by Moscow. The East Germans are most favored, mainly for their security and intelligence expertise—reflected in the widespread reliance of LDCs on Berlin for such assistance. Similarly, some Libyan pilot trainees prefer basic training in Poland to the USSR because of

the former's greater flexibility in accommodating specific student weaknesses, according to US attache reporting. Some recipients rely on technicians and instructors because of their unique capabilities with certain weapon systems. Czechoslovak aircraft mechanics, for example, were credited by Nigeria for expediting pilot training in 1982 because they were able to decrease aircraft downtime.

This success contrasts sharply with the often maligned Soviet effort on MIG-21 fighters.

East European training and advisory programs, like virtually all Communist and non-Communist efforts, do not escape criticism. Some LDC concerns reflect the close ties between Moscow and its closest allies. North Yemen's wariness of the Soviet-East German relationship, for example, was exacerbated in early 1980 when, according to US attache reporting, Moscow pressured Sanaa to admit East German technical advisers. Other East European countries have been criticized mainly for substantive training shortfalls. There is little question, however, that poorly qualified students have contributed to the problem.

We believe that East European advisory and training programs will continue to expand in the near term, albeit at varying rates. The high demand for security and intelligence services by LDCs, for example, is expected to result in an even more active East German program. By contrast, Czechoslovak and Polish efforts probably will continue at recent levels only if Libya or another large client relies on these countries, because they are unable to offer a wide range of services. Similarly, there is no evidence to indicate that Bulgaria, Hungary, or Romania will become a major source of personnel assistance for LDC governments because these suppliers offer little expertise that is not already available from other countries, often as part of an integrated weapons transfer program. Bulgaria, however, probably will maintain its active support of irredentist and insurgent groups, both on its own and Moscow's behalf.

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Appendix A

Eastern Europe: Growth of Military Advisory and Training Programs, 1974-83

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Table A-1

Number of persons ^a

**Eastern Europe:
Estimated Military and Paramilitary
Personnel in LDCs, 1974-83**

	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Total	140	270	560	645	1,300	1,405	1,485	1,865	2,675	2,655
North Africa	30	35	85	90	450	35	165	600	815	815
Algeria						15	15	NA	15	15
Libya	30	35	85	90	450	20	150	600	800	800
Sub-Saharan Africa		10	90	165	515	820	930	765	1,250	1,170
Angola			50	55	300	400	550	400	500	500
Ethiopia					100	250	200	200	600	600
Mozambique						50	50	50		
Zambia					80	30	80	40	50	NA
Other		10	40	110	35	90	50	75	100	70
Latin America							NA	NA	60	60
Nicaragua							NA	NA	60	60
Middle East	110	225	385	390	335	550	390	500	550	585
Iraq	5		100	115	100	65	50	50	100	100
South Yemen	25	25	35	35	50	300	100	100	100	100
Syria	80	200	250	220	180	180	240	300	300	300
Other				20	5	5		50	50	85
South Asia								NA	NA	25
Afghanistan								NA	NA	25
India									NA	NA

^a Minimum number present for at least one month.

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Table A-2

Number of persons

Eastern Europe:

Estimated LDC Trainees Departing for
Military and Paramilitary Training, 1974-83

	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Total	110	235	475	655	845	375	530	860	1,555	1,840
North Africa		25		NA	40	220	115	200	1,200	1,400
Algeria									260	200
Libya		25		NA	40	220	115	200	940	1,200
Sub-Saharan Africa		95	150	390	155	135	345	150	110	15
Angola			NA	NA	5		NA	NA	NA	NA
Congo			40			NA	NA	40	NA	
Ethiopia				300	150	50	30	20		NA
Guinea		10						45	NA	NA
Mozambique			30			60	100	NA		NA
Zambia							110		25	
Zimbabwe									85	15
Other		85	80	90		25	105	45		
Latin America							65	45	NA	NA
Nicaragua							65	45	NA	NA
Middle East	110	75	285	230	650	20	5	95	240	425
Iran								80	50	200
Iraq	60	25	135	155	150	10		10	80	50
South Yemen									10	10
Syria	50	50	120	75	500	10	NA	5	100	100
Other			30				5			65
South Asia		40	40	35			NA	370	5	NA
Afghanistan				35			NA	370	5	NA
India		40	40							NA

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